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Letter dated 9 July 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to attach herewith a copy of the Joint Declaration of the Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles, made on 4 July 2003 (see annex).

This Declaration was made at a solemn ceremony at the Presidential Palace of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire in Abidjan, in the presence of the President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Laurent Gbagbo, the Government of National Reconciliation, the leading political, administrative, religious, traditional, military and national security forces and the Forces Nouvelles, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the members of the Follow-Up Committee to the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, the diplomatic corps accredited in Côte d'Ivoire, the impartial forces of the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI), the ECOWAS Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (ECOMICI) and the French Forces (Unicorn).

I should be grateful if you could publish the said Declaration as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) D. Philippe **Djangone-Bi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 9 July 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Joint Declaration of the Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles

In view of the grave dangers that threaten the national reconciliation process, the Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles met on Wednesday, 2 July 2003 in Abidjan and agreed to adopt the following declaration, with a view to reassuring all the population groups living in Côte d'Ivoire and reaffirming the desire for peace which the great majority of Ivorians feel.

Thus:

Considering that Côte d'Ivoire has suffered enough from the war into which it was plunged on 19 September 2002,

Considering that the people's pain and distress must be brought to an immediate end,

Considering that all conflicts must necessarily be resolved through dialogue and cooperation,

Considering that every new death is pointless and further complicates national reconciliation,

Considering that partitioning Côte d'Ivoire, even briefly, would not be to the advantage of any of the parties,

Considering that war can be justified only in order to defend values connected to the general and collective interest and that only the latter may justify the sacrifice of a combatant,

Considering that Côte d'Ivoire is the common asset of all Ivorians and, as such, represents the general interest to be defended come what may,

Considering that diversity of communities, traditions, cultures, beliefs and opinions is a source of wealth,

Considering that Côte d'Ivoire's viability lies in its economy and that this economy has been damaged by more than eight months of war,

Considering the interest that the international community has shown in Côte d'Ivoire by deploying the impartial forces of MINUCI, ECOMICI and UNICORN,

Considering the need to guarantee equal opportunity to young people and future generations,

The Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles, taking into account the observance of the complete ceasefire signed on 3 May 2003 and the elimination of the war zones,

1. Declare the war to have ended on this day, 4 July 2003,

2. Undertake to support the provisions of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement and the Accra arrangements,

3. Affirm that they are subordinate to the President of the Republic and to the Government of National Reconciliation,

4. Are determined to work together to avoid any hint of resumption of hostilities through insidious and irresponsible manipulations and to bring peace to the national territory by ridding it of all foreign combatants,

5. Reaffirm that the national programme of demobilization, disarmament and reinsertion will continue,

6. Support activities aimed at securing a return to normal administrative, economic and social relations.

Consequently, the Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles,

7. Recommend that the President of the Republic appoint, within a reasonable period of time, the ministers responsible for defence and security, in conformity with the Accra II procedures,

8. Invite the deputies to adopt the amnesty law that will be proposed to them by the Government of National Reconciliation, as this provision, which was provided for in the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, will reunify Côte d'Ivoire by making all population groups subject to the same laws,

9. Ask all State agents, in particular those in direct contact with the people, to show justice, discipline, integrity and republican responsibility in exercising their duties,

10. Invite the politicians to commit themselves unreservedly to applying the provisions of the Linas-Marcoussis and Accra Agreements, to which they are signatories,

11. Call on the politicians to end the rearmament of the forces and to postpone arms deliveries with a view to facilitating the implementation of the National Demobilization, Disarmament and Reinsertion Programme,

12. Urge the politicians to ensure that both their words and deeds are aimed at securing national unity,

13. Exhort the national press to work to bring population groups together and to secure unity and national harmony,

14. Call on Ivorian youth in its entirety to work towards union, brotherhood and respect for laws and regulations,

15. Undertake to dismantle, everywhere in Côte d'Ivoire, groups of ill-intentioned youths, both armed and unarmed, in order to provide the people with a feeling of security and reassure the international community,

16. Ask all the population groups living in the territory of Côte d'Ivoire to develop tolerance and respect for difference,

17. Undertake to guarantee equal security to all population groups and in particular to the members of the Government of National Reconciliation,

18. Shall do everything in their power to foster the free movement of persons and goods throughout the national territory.

On the basis of the foregoing, the Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles consider that our country has shed enough blood during these long months of war.

All the population groups living in Côte d'Ivoire should therefore accept the current logic of peace and permanently abandon divisive attitudes and words, for the blood that has been shed during this war must serve as a foundation for a renewed drive towards brotherhood and solidarity.

For this reason Côte d'Ivoire must now make a date with history by showing the international community that it has the resources and capacity needed to rise above its contradictions and work towards peace once again.

Furthermore, the duty to remember requires us to think of the thousands of men, women and children who have died or been permanently scarred by this war.

In defending the values dear to us, we, the soldiers of the Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and of the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles, have done our duty. The task ahead is to draw the proper lessons from this commitment, in order that our country may never again know war.

To that end, we who have been the main actors during this war, united in our determination to develop a truly republican army once again, undertake to build our common destiny by agreeing to silence our weapons and turn to discussion and cooperation instead.

The Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles, together, invite all population groups living in the territory of Côte d'Ivoire to follow them on the road to peace, for they will not hesitate to shoulder their responsibilities should new disturbances break out.

Done at Abidjan on 4 July 2003

For the Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire

Major-General Mathias **Doue**
Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces

(*Signed*) By order, Colonel **Kadio Miezou**
Head of COIA

For the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles

(*Signed*) Colonel **Bakayoko Soumaila**
Chief of Staff a.i. of the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles